

REMARKS

Amendments to the claims

Claim 1 has been broadened to recite "*a female connector for operative connection to a baseboard, and provided for receiving an add-in card having a male connector on a first edge for receipt by the female connector and a notch for receipt of a retention formation of the female connector*". This amendment is supported by the application, in particular Figs. 1, 2, 4b and 6, and the corresponding portion of the specification.

Further, claim 1 has been clarified to recite "*a carriage part movable along ~~the~~ a length of the female connector, in a direction substantially perpendicular to the direction of insertion of the male connector in the female connector and providing support for the retention formation*". This amendment is supported by the application, in particular Figs. 4b and 5, and the corresponding portion of the specification.

Claim 9 has been amended to recite "*An I/O expansion system according to claim 1, further comprising an add-in card having a male connector on a first edge and a notch for receipt of a retention formation of the female connector for ~~an I/O expansion system according to claim 1~~*". This amendment is supported by the application, in particular Figs. 3a-b and 4b, and the corresponding portion of the specification.

Claim 10 has been clarified by reciting that the carriage part is "*movable along ~~the~~ a length of the female connector in a direction substantially perpendicular to the direction of insertion of the male edge connector in the female connector*". This amendment is supported by the application, in particular Figs. 4b and 5, and the corresponding portion of the specification.

Objections to the claims

Claim 9 stands objected to for not limiting the claim from which it depends. The Applicant respectfully submits that amended claim 9 limits amended claim 1.

Claims 5, 7 and 8 stand objected to as being in improper form, in particular for being multiply dependent. The applicant respectfully draws the attention of the Examiner to the fact that the Preliminary Amendment of February 19, 2004 has modified the original dependency of the claims so that no pending claim is multiply dependent.

In view of the above, the Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the above objections.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102

Claims I, 4, 6, 9 and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,338,636 to Nishioka. The Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Claim 1

The Applicant notes that Nishioka and the structure recited in claim 1 have totally different technical aims: Nishioka aims at easing the extraction of a card from a connector, whereas the structure recited in claim 1 aims at enabling receiving cards with different connector width in a single connector.

In the Action, the Examiner asserts that Nishioka discloses a carriage part (comprising 10, 9) moveable along the length of a female connector and providing support for a retention formation (comprising 8b, 7). The Applicant respectfully disagrees. In Nishioka, references 10, 9, 8b and 7 are an "unlocking member", a "coil spring", an "eject arm" and a "slide member". The Applicant notes that unlocking member 10 is only in contact with slide member 7 through notch groove 10c and return arm part 7d, and does not contact eject arm 8b, and does not "support" either of them. The Applicant further notes that coil spring 9 is only used to push slide member 7, and

does not contact eject arm 8b, and so does not "support" either of slide member 7 and eject arm 8b. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully submits that:

unlocking member 10 and spring coil 9 cannot be deemed to disclose a "carriage";
and

unlocking member 10 and spring coil 9 cannot be deemed to disclose a structure that "supports" either of slide member 7 or eject arm 8b.

The Applicant acknowledges that Nishioka discloses (see Figs. 19-28) a connector (1) provided for receiving a card (3) having a notch (3b) for receipt of an eject arm (8b), and further including a slide member (7) providing support for the eject arm (8b).

However, the Applicant notes that the Examiner has failed to show that the "eject arm" (8b) of Nishioka, provided for ejecting the card from the connector, anticipates in any way a "retention formation", as recited in claim 1.

Further, the Applicant notes that the slide member (7) of Nishioka is movable along a length of the connector (1) in a direction substantially parallel to the direction of insertion of the card (3) in the connector (see column 5, line 67 to column 6, line 1), which cannot be deemed to disclose or suggest a carriage part "*movable along a length of the female connector, in a direction substantially perpendicular to the direction of insertion of the male connector in the female connector*", as recited in claim 1.

The Applicant submits that at least in view of the above, claim 1 is patentable over Nishioka.

Claim 10

The above arguments can be used to show that Nishioka does not disclose or suggest a structure as recited in claim 10, and in particular having a "carriage part movable along a length of the female connector in a direction substantially perpendicular to the direction of insertion of the male edge connector in the female connector". Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully submits that claim 10 is patentable over Nishioka.

Claims 4, 6 and 9

Claims 4, 6 and 9 depend on claim 1. The Applicant respectfully submits that, at least in view of their dependency on claim 1, claims 4, 6 and 9 are patentable over Nishioka.

Allowable subject matter

Applicant acknowledges with gratitude the Examiner's indication of allowability as to claims 2 and 3, should claims 2 and 3 be rewritten in independent form. However, the Applicant submits that at least in view of their dependency on patentable claim 1, claims 2 and 3 in their current form are patentable over Nishioka.

* * *

In view of the above, the Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance and respectfully urges the Examiner to pass this case to issue.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required or credit overpayment to deposit account no. 08-2025. In particular, if this response is not timely filed, the Commissioner is authorized to treat this response as including a petition to extend the time period pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) requesting an extension of time of the number of months necessary to make this response timely filed and the petition fee due in connection therewith may be charged to deposit account no. 08-2025.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Post Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on

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Elizabeth McInerney

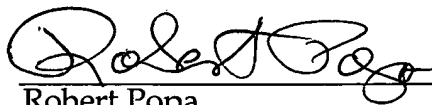
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(Signature)

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(Date)

Respectfully submitted,



Robert Popa

Attorney for Applicants

Reg. No. 43,010

LADAS & PARRY

5670 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 2100

Los Angeles, California 90036

(323) 934-2300 voice

(323) 934-0202 facsimile

rpopa@ladasperry.com